

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CANBER 01779 250639Z

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2849

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S E C R E T CANBERRA 1779

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: MARR, PINR, AS, UR, US

SUBJ: SOVIET PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A JOINT SOVIET-AUSTRALIAN
STATION FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC OBSERVATIONS OF EARTH SATELLITES.

REF: STATE 056742

1. I SAW ALAN RENOUF, SECRETARY OF DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MORNING MAR 25 AND READ TO HIM BASIC POINTS CONTAINED IN REFTEL. RENOUF SEEMED PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN INFORMATION CONTAINED PARA 5 REFTEL, RELATED TO U.S. EXPERIENCE WITH SOVIETS IN SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION AND FACT THAT WE LIMIT SUCH COOPERATION TO NON-MILITARY ACTIVITIES. I PREFACED MY REMARKS BY STATING THAT THERE WAS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AT HAND, SOME OF IT OF A TECHNICAL NATURE, WHICH WOULD BE PASSED FROM OUR OEPOLE TO CHIEF DEFENCE SCIENTIST, DR. JOHN L. FARRANDS.

2. RENOUF ANSWERED MY PRESENTATION BY SAYING THAT THERE WOULD BE NO TROUBLE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE, AND WITH EITHER PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM OR MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS WILLESEE. HE NOTED THAT THERE MIGHT BE "SOME TROUBLE" WITH MINISTER FOR SCIENCE MORRISON, ALTHOUGH RENOUF BELIEVED THAT EVEN MORRISON WOULD BE PERSUADED ON PRESENTATION MADE BY USG. RENOUF SUMMED IT UP BY SAYING, "WE WILL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS PROPOSAL."

3. DURING MY PRESENTATION, RENOUF INTERRUPTED ONLY ONCE. THIS

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OCCURRED WHEN I READ THE COUNTRIES LISTED IN PARA 2 REFTEL

WHERE "PHOTOGRAPHIC OBSERVATIONS OF EARTH SATELLITES" ARE BEING CONDUCTED BY SOVIET SCIENTISTS. RENOUF PARENTHETICALLY INTERJECTED, "WE WOULD BE IN GREAT COMPANY, WOULDN'T WE."

4. RENOUF GAVE HIS FULL ATTENTION TO MY PRESENTATION AND WAS IN A RELAXED MOOD HAVING JUST RETURNED FROM DAYS AT A SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM MEETING AT RAROTONGA. ALTHOUGH RENOUF'S REACTION TO MY PRESENTATION WAS EXTREMELY FORTHCOMING AND POSITIVE TO OUR SUGGESTIONS, FINAL WORD HAS OBVIOUSLY NOT YET EMERGED. WE WILL PURSUE BRIEFING OF FARRANDS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ON THIS SUBJECT.

5. I WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND DEPARTMENT FOR EXCELLENT REFTTEL WHICH PUT U.S. CASE AND EXPERIENCE IN SUCCINCT AND VERY PRESENTABLE FORM.
GREEN

SECRET

NNN

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